

Global Polio Eradication Initiative

Polio in Afghanistan in 2008-09

Situation analysis

- 31 polio cases in 2008, four cases in 2009 (as of 25 March).
- Polio primarily restricted to security-compromised areas of the Southern Region.
- Highly-performing eradication programme in all areas of the country, with vaccination coverage gaps in the Southern Region.

Fast Facts

- ✓ Polio restricted to security-compromised areas of Southern Region
- ✓ Closing vaccination coverage gap in Southern Region will rapidly stop polio

Key challenges

- Increasing the quality of vaccination campaigns in the Southern Region.
- Reaching all children in security-compromised areas of the Southern Region.
- Large-scale population movements, including with neighbouring Pakistan.

Solutions

- Identifying and mapping mobile populations and population routes, and setting up vaccination posts at key nomadic gathering sites and cross-border points.
- Synchronizing activities with neighbouring Pakistan.
- Engaging and increasing the involvement of all parties – including government, anti-government elements, the military, non-governmental organizations and tribal leaders – to negotiate safe passage of polio vaccinators.
- Using any window of opportunity as and when they arise in between large-scale nationwide immunization campaigns, to deliver an extra dose of oral polio vaccine (OPV) to communities living in insecure areas.
- With moderate access to all populations in the Southern Region, polio transmission can be rapidly stopped.
- A National Immunization Day (NID) using trivalent oral polio vaccine (tOPV) was held from 15-17 March. A sub-national immunization day (SNID) was held from 12-14 April, using mOPV1 and mOPV3, with further rounds planned for May, June and July.

Afghanistan: polio cases in 2008

